

UNCLASSIFIED 3/22/76

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TELEGRAM

CONTROL: 1896
22 Mar 76
1825

INDICATE
☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

13-10
AY014

	FROM Amembassy BUENOS AIRES	CLASSIFICATION [REDACTED]	
E.O. 11652:	GDS	ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)	
TAGS:	PINS, PINT, ELAB, AR	U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS	
SUBJECT:	Terrorist Toll Continues High	Margaret P. Grafeld, Director	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Release <input type="checkbox"/> Excise <input type="checkbox"/> Deny	
ACTION:	Secstate WASHDC PRIORITY	Exemption(s):	
	[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES	Declassify: <input type="checkbox"/> In Part <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Full	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Classify as <input type="checkbox"/> Extend as <input type="checkbox"/> Downgrade	
		Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____	
REF	Buenos Aires 1791		
	<p>1. <u>Summary</u>: With local press openly reporting that coup may take place "within hours", death toll from terrorist acts nearing all-time high. Privately, political contacts voicing concern that many of the dead are "pre-coup victims" of provincial military and police vengeance. <u>End Summary</u>.</p> <p>2. Long-time observers of Argentine political scene state that public reporting of imminent coup is without precedent in modern Argentine history. Given widespread public acceptance of idea that coup imminent, chief concern of most Embassy contacts is that the provincial level police and military authorities despite repeat orders from higher command are moving to settle scores with local leftists, labor, students and other antagonists. From Mar 1 to 20 of this year forty-six persons have died as a result of</p>		

CHARGE
POL-3
POL/R
ECOM
USIS
USDAO
MILGP-2
SCIAT
LEGAT
RF
CHRON

DRAFTED BY: POL:FJZambito:cc <i>FJZ</i>	DRAFTING DATE 3/22/76	TEL. EXT. 121	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: POL:WSSmith <i>WSS</i>
CLEARANCES: DAO: PACoughlin <i>WPC</i> LEGATT: RWScherrer <i>WRS</i>		CHARGE: HMcIWoodward <i>H</i>	

FORM
11-72 FS-413

[REDACTED]
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terrorist acts of both right and left. Another twelve to fifteen died over last weekend. From beginning of year to date, over 165 persons have been killed as result of political violence.

3. While political violence per se is not new feature of Argentine scene, there is increasing concern among civilians, politicians, and newsmen, including those who look on a golpe favorably, that latest acts may foreshadow inability of Army command and police authority to control their subordinates when the coup comes. One leftist politician told Emboff over weekend that he has become fervent supporter of Videla-Viola coup saying that "if they don't do it soon some hard-line general in the provinces will push them aside and plunge the country into bloodbath in misguided effort to purify the body politic." While somewhat overdrawn, the fear is ~~shared~~ shared ~~among~~ among responsible civilians.

4. The fact that many of latest acts have taken place in remote areas far from Federal Capital or principal cities and that victims in these areas are more often than not "leftists" adds credence to these fears. While all killings may not be work of military and police, it is highly probable that many are. The killing of Santillan, leftist SecGen of Tucuman Sugar Workers Federation (FOTIA), was almost certainly ~~the~~ the work of the military or police. He was

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assassinated in his union headquarters midday today,
Mar 22. Santillan had long history of collaboration with
Trotskyite leaders Tosco and Salamanca, but reportedly
had reached live and let live accord with national
Peronist labor leadership approximately six months ago.
He is most prominent labor leader killed within recent
months.

5. Comment: Latest turn in terrorist acts attributed to
military add substance to comments Emboffs have received
from sources in recent days stating "nature of coup
presently planned to be moderate and legalistic will not
be determined until there is evidence that Videla-
Viola-Massera et al will in event be able to impose this
policy on their subordinates."

H. Woodward
WOODWARD

FORM
4-68 FS-413A
CONTINUATION SHEET


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